

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A fuel filter usable to filter fuel, comprising:
  - a housing including a first filter chamber and a second filter chamber, said first filter chamber and said second filter chamber extending longitudinally within said housing and separated by a chamber wall disposed between the first filter chamber and the second filter chamber;
  - a filter element having a filter media surrounding said first filter chamber and said second filter chamber;
  - an inlet and an outlet attached to said housing;
  - a valve assembly disposed between said first filter chamber and said second filter chamber, said valve assembly further comprising:
    - a valve casing attached to said chamber wall;
    - a valve head slidably disposed within said valve casing and movable between a first valve head position and a second valve head position;
    - a flag indicator slidably disposed within said valve casing that is movable between a first flag indicator position and a second flag indicator position and attached to said valve head;
    - a port located in said valve casing that allows a fuel to flow from said first filter chamber to said second filter chamber, when said valve head moves from said first valve head position to said second valve head position;
    - a transparent portion located on said valve casing that allows said flag indicator to be visible when said flag indicator is moved from said first flag indicator position to said second flag indicator position.
2. The fuel filter according to claim 1, wherein said valve casing has a rib portion located on an interior surface.
3. The fuel filter according to claim 2, wherein said valve assembly further comprises at least one arm having a contact point, said at least one arm attached to said valve head and wherein said contact point abuts said rib portion to prevent said valve head from moving from said first valve head position to said second valve head position during a normal filtering condition of said fuel filter.

4. The fuel filter according to claim 3, wherein said arm is flexible and allows said contact point to slidably move passed said rib portion of said valve casing to allow said fuel to flow into said second fuel chamber during a bypass condition.
5. The fuel filter according to claim 1, wherein said valve assembly further comprises an urging member that assists in urging said valve head from said first valve head position to said second valve head position during said bypass condition.
6. The fuel filter according to claim 5, wherein said valve assembly further comprises an urging member housing that houses said urging member.
7. The fuel filter according to claim 6, wherein said urging member housing is open to allow fuel flow into said valve assembly.
8. The fuel filter according to claim 5, wherein said valve head has an urging member accommodating portion that prevents lateral movement of said urging member.
9. The fuel filter according to claim 5, wherein said urging member is a helical spring.
10. The fuel filter according to claim 1, wherein said transparent portion located on said valve casing makes a liquid tight seal with said filter housing to prevent fuel from leaking to an external portion of said housing.
11. The fuel filter according to claim 1, wherein said fuel filter is electronically connected to a remote indicator to signal a condition of said fuel filter.
12. The fuel filter according to claim 1, wherein said fuel filter is electronically connected to a central processing unit to signal a condition of said fuel filter.
13. The fuel filter according to claim 1, wherein said central processing unit is electronically connected to a warning light on a consol of a vehicle.
14. A vehicle having an internal combustion engine, further comprising the fuel filter of claim 1.
15. A method of filtering fuel with a fuel filtering device, said fuel filtering device having a housing including a first filter chamber and a second filter chamber separated by a chamber wall, a filter element having a filter media surrounding said first filter chamber and said second filter chamber, an inlet and an outlet attached to said housing, a valve assembly disposed between said first filter chamber and said second filter chamber, said valve assembly having a valve casing, a valve head, a flag indicator attached to said valve head, a port located in said valve casing and a transparent portion located on said valve casing, comprising the steps of:

passing an unfiltered fuel into said filtering device via said inlet and through said filter media of said filter element of said first filtering chamber during a normal filtering condition;

passing a filtered fuel via said outlet out of said fuel filtering device during said normal filtering condition;

moving said valve head from a first valve head position to a second valve head position by an increase in a fuel pressure created by one of a clogged condition and a partially clogged condition of said filter media of said first filtering chamber;

moving said flag indicator from a first flag indicator position to a second flag indicator position in said transparent portion of said valve casing based on one of a clogged condition and a partially clogged condition of said filter media of said first filtering chamber;

passing said unfiltered fuel through said port in said valve casing to said filter media of said second filtering chamber during a bypass condition;

passing a filtered fuel via said outlet out of said fuel filtering device during said bypass condition.

16. The method according to claim 15, further comprising locking said valve head in said first position by abutting a contact point of at least one arm connected to said valve head against a rib portion of said valve casing.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising deflecting said at least one arm attached to said valve head while simultaneously moving said valve head from said first valve head position to said second valve head position.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising slidably passing said contact point of said at least one arm passed said rib portion of said valve casing to unlock said valve head from said first valve head position.

19. The method of claim 15, further comprising urging said valve head from a first valve head position to a second valve head position with an urging member in response to an increase in a fuel pressure created by one of a clogged condition and a partially clogged condition of said filter media of said first filter chamber.

20. The method of claim 15, further comprising electronically sending a signal to a remote indicator signaling a condition of said fuel filter.